



The Breeze

James Madison University's Student Newspaper

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Monday, November 6, 2006

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those "American values."



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New and Improv'd stands
up and for a story.

Guantanamo an issue?

Treatment of detainees
raises questions for some

BY DOMINIC DESMOND
news editor

Senior Nicole Snyder won't be going home to Kentucky on Tuesday to vote. More conveniently, though, she'll be casting an absentee ballot, but she's very concerned that the ballot won't be counted.

If her ballot is counted, her vote will go to Democratic congressional candidate John Yarmuth, because she said he's "passionate" about the issues surrounding the U.S. naval base in Guantánamo Bay.

Specifically, Snyder is worried about allegations of detainee mistreatment on the U.S. base. Snyder is also the president of the JMU chapter of Amnesty International and said her organization is attempting to educate people about detainee treatment.

"It's an issue that hasn't really been addressed," she said. "People don't know what's going on. They're concerned with finding terrorists, but they don't realize there are 10-year-olds in Guantánamo."

Justice studies professor Ari Kohen said international human rights organizations have suggested that problems arise from holding prisoners indefinitely and without being formally charged, which is the case for some detainees at Guantánamo. He also said this base has gained "incredible notoriety" because of the high-security detainees being held there.

Kohen said since U.S. bases are on U.S. soil, the cases there should be handled the same way they are in America.

"There have been all sorts of controversies that have arisen about [the United

States] trying to circumvent the Geneva Convention," Kohen said. "If we apprehended somebody here, the assumption is they went to an American court and an American detention facility, they would have these rights, but maybe not elsewhere."

In October, Congress passed the Military Commission Act — a bill that would effectively eliminate habeas corpus for terrorist suspects being held in U.S. custody and would allow the president to determine who an unlawful enemy combatant is.

"That's dangerous, considering who our president is," senior Matthew Crawford said. "In fact, let's have him write all the laws and interpret them."

"Sophomore William Thomas Webb, member of the College Republicans and regional political director for the Shenandoah Valley for the Republican Party, doesn't think Guantánamo is on the top of the electoral docket.

"It's not in the forefront of voters' minds," Webb said. He did say, however, if the Republicans stay in power after the election, Guantánamo will stay open.

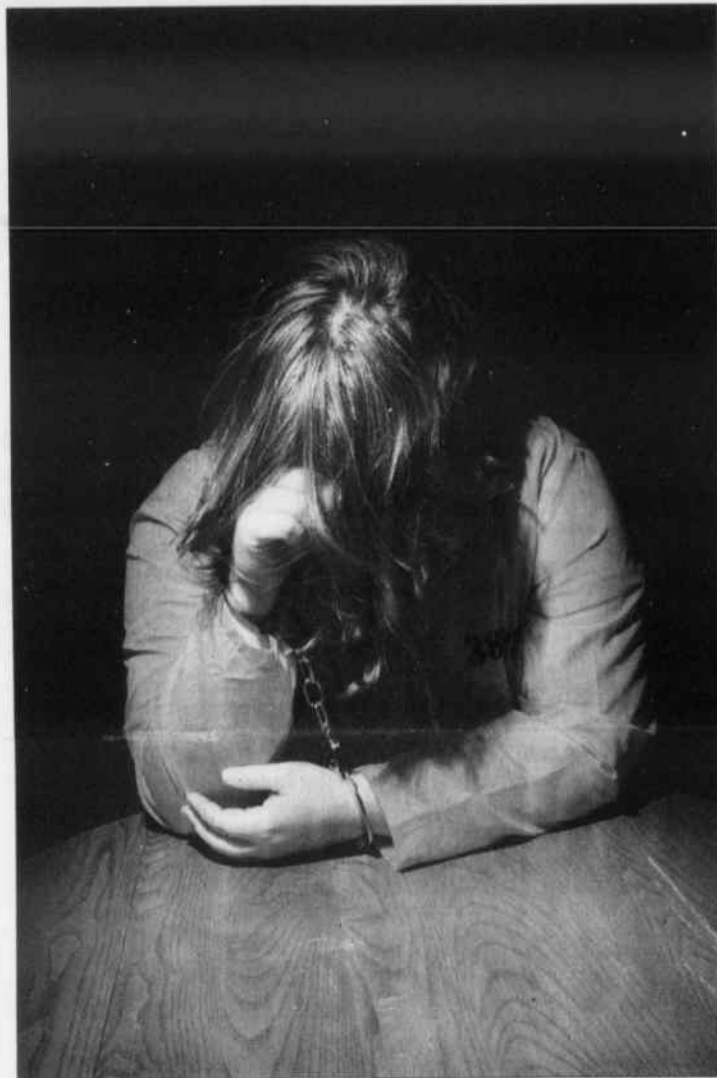
On the other side of the aisle, the Democrats are looking into the long term, said the College Democrats' president Jessica Killeen.

"Americans want security now and in the future," she said.

Killeen said the there is no oversight when it comes to the Military Commissions Act.

Kohen said Guantánamo is not a partisan issue.

"You shouldn't like torturing people," Kohen said. "It's a no-brainer. We don't do those things."



JMU students are concerned about the reported mistreatment of detainees at the United States' detention center at Guantánamo Bay.

Voter turnout higher

18-to-24 group
registration up
to 47 percent

BY SHAYNA STRANG
contributing writer

Voter participation from ages 18 to 29 was at its highest rate in over a decade after the 2004 presidential election, according to the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement. With the national youth voter turnout rate for presidential elections up to 47 percent, this year's midterm election may see the largest outcome of youth voters since 1994.

Organizations on campus like OrangeBand and the SGA made significant efforts to get students to vote during the 2004 presidential campaign. Research has shown young citizens vote at a lower rate than older citizens, so debates, forums and other events were held to encourage voting.

"I remember SGA's table on the commons. They reminded me to get an absentee ballot," junior Kelly Christian said.

These little reminders seem to be necessary around election time with a lot of students focusing on school, activities and jobs. This year's election appears to have less coverage on campus when compared to 2004. While SGA placed tables on the commons again, there were fewer organization events than before.

"There's not as much effort for students this year," junior Elizabeth Montgomery said.

Some say candidates aren't making efforts, either. Candidates don't regularly visit colleges for midterm elections, which can cause students to lose interest, political science professor Robert N. Roberts said. This may be because presidential elections generally receive more attention and votes than midterm elections, according to CIRCE.

But this attitude may be changing, according to a recent article in *The Washington Post*.

Campaigners are beginning to invest in new staff and technology to get the youth vote because of the recent participation increase, according to the article.

Students may not pay much attention to midterm elections because many are from states other than Virginia, SGA Sen. Jamie Lockhart (Jr.) said. For many students it seems easier to connect on a national level rather than local.

"Presidential elections get more attention on campus because they unite students," Lockhart said.

Location and time aren't the only factors that affect the youth vote. This year's campaigns have also influenced many students on voting.

"All the focus was taken off of what's important," said Tyler Burton, president of the JMU Chapter of OrangeBand.

By concentrating more on personal attacks than the issues, students may feel frustrated or disconnected when they try to get involved.

"Negativity can lead to apathy, especially among young voters," Roberts said.

Students need to know they matter, Christian said. Through campus events, students who are away from home for the first time or don't have voting experience are able to feel involved and are shown

see VOTE, page 3

Credit provides loan alternative



Using credit cards instead of taking out student loans is an alternative for paying college tuition.

Student uses plastic to pay his college tuition

BY ASHLEY HOPKINS
staff writer

Brian Creasy graduated from JMU in 2001 after paying for three years of his undergraduate degree with a credit card.

Creasy, currently a graduate student in the psychological science program, decided to charge his tuition when he felt he would be ineligible to receive financial aid.

"I was bringing in enough money on my own by working all the time," Creasy said.

Creasy's story is becoming a trend in recent years, with more than half of college students owning at least one credit card, a quarter of which use their cards to pay tuition, according to MSNBC.

A July MSNBC article stated that overall, more than four in 10 student cardholders carried a credit card balance from month to month, with a median balance of \$1,000, according to an American Council on Education analysis of 2003-'04 federal data.

In addition, the study showed that 55 percent of students who used their cards to pay tuition

were carrying a balance, compared with 38 percent who had not charged tuition.

While financial aid and installment plans are often used to cover tuition due to their lower interest rates, there are benefits to using a credit card.

For many, credit cards are more convenient than financial aid, which often require a lot of paperwork.

"Using a credit card was much more convenient than having to find my tax information, fill out all the financial aid paperwork, wait to receive a pin number and then fill out some more paperwork," Creasy said.

Creasy also said he benefited from using a credit card because it allowed him to deal with payments sooner rather than later, forcing him to prioritize his time. In order to keep his balance low, he had to work more than 30 hours a week while attending classes and completing his schoolwork.

"I had heard so many horror stories about students graduating with huge student loans to pay off," Creasy said. "One of the reasons I kept paying by credit card was that it forced me to deal with the problem in the present and not put it off until I graduated. It worked for me because I'm one of those strange individuals who actually do a better job when I've got more on

my plate."

Although Creasy listed the many benefits of paying tuition with credit cards, he was quick to admit that it's not for everyone and said that he would recommend applying for financial aid.

"For those who have doubts about whether or not they may qualify for financial aid, I would suggest applying anyway," Creasy said.

Sharon Michie, a credit counselor for AAA Alliance Credit Counseling Inc., also warned against using a credit card for large expenses.

"We as a society are ingrained that credit cards are the way to go," she said, adding that they are quickly made available to people as soon as they turn 18.

Despite the fact that they are readily available, Michie thinks credit cards place students at a disadvantage if they are unable to keep up payments and consistently pay on time. In cases such as these, interest goes up, which can increase debt and lead to higher payments in the future.

"In hindsight, I probably should have applied for financial aid just to have it there as a cushion in case money got tight," Creasy said. "When I got accepted into graduate school, that is exactly what I did. I still have yet to spend a dime of it, but it's nice to know that it's there."

The Breeze

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Around Campus

Former E.U. Parliament member lectures today

Ika Schroeder, a former member of the European Parliament for the Green Party, will lecture today, at 7 p.m. in Blackwell Auditorium in Moody Hall.

Schroeder, currently a visiting professor at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., will present "Between Hypocritical Solidarity and Open Anti-Zionism — How Germany and the E.U. Work against Israel."

Photo exhibit examines effects of terrorism

A photography exhibit examining the effects of terrorism on a civilian population will be on display in Carrier Library lobby from Nov. 5 to 20.

The exhibit, "Inside Terrorism: The X-Ray Project," features x-rays and CT scans of victims of terror. The exhibit features images taken at two of Jerusalem's largest hospitals. The exhibit is a project of photographer Diane Covert to visually depict the horrors of terrorism.

In the Valley

First urban pocket park opens downtown

HARRISONBURG — On Friday, the city officially opened its first urban pocket park, located across the street from the Massanutten Regional Library, the *Daily News-Record* reported Saturday.

Officials say the \$80,000 park is just 15 feet wide and 80 feet deep but packs a \$25,000 commercial cascading waterfall, four raised landscape beds, movable tables and chairs — all enclosed by a custom-made cast-iron fence.

World & Nation

Saddam Hussein sentenced to death

BAGHDAD — An Iraqi special tribunal today convicted Saddam Hussein of crimes against humanity and sentenced him to death by hanging for the brutal repression of a Shiite town in the 1980s, the *New York Times* reported yesterday.

The verdict, under Iraqi law, will immediately be submitted to an appellate court, which will begin its review within a month, officials said.

Reverend confesses homosexual tendencies

DENVER — Less than 24 hours after he was fired from the pulpit of the evangelical megachurch he founded, the Rev. Ted Haggard confessed to his followers Sunday that he was guilty of sexual immorality, the Associated Press reported yesterday.

Haggard resigned last week as president of the National Association of Evangelicals, after a man claimed to have had drug-fueled homosexual trysts with him.

Taiwanese president apologizes for comments

TAIPEI — Taiwanese President Chen Shui-bian on Sunday apologized for causing political turmoil that hurt "the nation's image," but he denied prosecutors' allegations that he was involved in embezzling money from a special fund for diplomacy, the Associated Press reported yesterday.

The president also refused to resign in his first public comments since prosecutors indicted first lady Wu Shu-chan on embezzlement, forgery and perjury charges on Friday.



photo illustration by EVAN DYSON/photo editor
Statistics from the JMU Department of Public Safety show that there were 22 more liquor law arrests in 2005 than in 2004.

A decreasingly sober outlook

Alcohol-related arrests increase nationwide

BY BEN BAYNTON
staff writer

The overall rate of alcohol-related arrests across campuses nationwide is rising, according to a report from the U.S. Department of Education.

Locally, statistics from the JMU Department of Public Safety show that liquor law arrests are up from 82 in 2004 to 104 in 2005.

"It's definitely a school for drinkers," sophomore Alex Hecker said. "People are always going to get really drunk."

Although JMU's Public Safety statistics show trends of 2005, 2006 is not an exception in terms of alcohol consumption and alcohol-related offenses.

In fact, according to a 2006 report by the JMU Office of Substance Abuse, 81.2 percent of JMU students said they had consumed alcohol in the last 30 days, compared to 75.1 percent in 2004. JMU students drink 2.4 more drinks a week than the national average.

"People do it because they think they'll fit into the crowd," junior Sarah Roquemore said.

Not only do JMU students report drinking more alcohol than the national average, but the same report showed that 60 percent said they had at least five beers in a single instance in the past two weeks, and 25 percent said they had more than five beers on three to five occasions in the past week.

One of the benefits for students on campus is that should they be caught violating the liquor law by University Police, their case can

be referred to JMU's Office of Judicial Affairs instead of an arrest being on their record.

But most students are still unsure about how to interact with police in the context of drinking.

"Or job is not so much enforcement as it is creating individual change," said Josh Bacon, director of Judicial Affairs. "We help reinforce community standards."

JMU Police patrol commander, lieutenant Robert Landes, agreed.

"Our main concern is the safety of the person that drinks too much," Landes said.

However, students caught by the Harrisonburg Police Department face arrest, because of zero-tolerance policies and the lack of less punitive options like Judicial Affairs. Most students fear future repercussions from an arrest on their record.

"The first thing I think when I see a cop isn't 'phew, I'm safe,'" junior Kyle Evans said. "In the context of drinking, [the cop] is the threat."

Many students echoed this sentiment. "There's always a stigma with the police on the negative side," Roquemore said.

The police do not view arrest as entirely punitive, though.

"The issue is, 'If we let them go back to their dorm, will they be safe?'" Landes said. He added that at the jail, a medical professional is on duty 24 hours a day to keep watch over detainees.

"They're there to protect the students," Bacon said. "The students really ought to be thankful."

Regardless of whatever the police hope the JMU community thinks of them, the students will continue to have a love-hate relationship with them.

"I'm more worried about legal trouble than being beat up by a gang," Evans said. "But the police protect me from the gang."

Rodgers asks what happened to 'wise men'

BY KIM CHI HA
contributing writer

Walter Rodgers, a veteran journalist and Distinguished Scholar in Residence at the Nelson Institute for International and Public Affairs, spoke to an audience of more than 100 students and Harrisonburg residents Wednesday as a part of the institute's Guardian Lecture Series.

"Great men are not always wise; where are the wise men in this country?" Rodgers said.

Rodgers said that political leaders today are not as learned as they were hundreds of years ago. People do not read enough books, especially in today's society where it is so easy to rely simply on the Internet and television.

"What if the leaders of our country aren't as wise as some of you?" he asked.

Al-Qaeda attempted attacks five times before they finally got it right Sept. 11. The Central Intelligence Agency sent warnings, but policy makers and those higher up in the chain of command failed to listen.

Rodgers was the senior international correspondent for

CNN based in London and worked in Moscow as ABC's news bureau chief. He has extensive experience in the Middle East, including covering Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003 as an embedded journalist.

"What worries me most is the public's indifference to what's happening [in Iraq]," Rodgers said.

A majority of American newspapers bury the stories in between the pages. People do not see the gruesome images from the daily attacks splattered on the front page, he said.

"It was not wise men who got us in there; it was pretty naive men who knew next to nothing about Islam or about Muslim people," he said.

Rodgers has more than 30 years of experience as a broadcast journalist. He has also written for the Associated Press, *Washingtonian* Magazine, the *Washington Post* and the *Christian Science Monitor*.

His main contention is how the policy-makers have handled this war. It seems as if they have been making up the road map as they go along; there was never any exit strategy, he said.

Students found his speech interesting, even though they didn't

agree with some of his points.

"I thought it was pretty good," senior Kevin Eichinger said. "He's got good credibility, but I think there were a lot of things I disagree with. Hindsight is always 20/20."

Rodgers is currently teaching a semester-long course at JMU entitled War and Journalism. The course, held once a week, is constructed around the theme of "war and the selling thereof" with a focus on how religion has been a driving force in the current conflicts in the Middle East.

"I wish it was more than once a week. I respect what he has to say and where he's been. Instead of dazing off, I'm there with him listening and writing down," senior David Hartman said. "The war on Iraq is such a hot topic, and so many people have different opinions that it's always interesting to hear someone like him who's been involved firsthand to hear his opinions."

"It is naive for neoconservatives to argue persuasively that the Arab world is going to rise up and embrace democracy," Rodgers said. "Am I saying Arab democracy doesn't work? No. I'm saying show me one."

VOTE: Absentee ballot most common for students voting in election

VOTE, from front how to vote. When taking a trip home to vote isn't an option, students need to know of the alternatives on campus.

The most common method of voting for students tends to be the absentee ballot. SGA has made efforts to simplify this process by setting up tables during each election to give students the ability to request an absentee ballot.

SGA will mail the ballot request forms; all the student has to do is mail the ballot before the deadline, which varies from state to state.

Students can also request an in-person absentee. Other students, like Montgomery, registered in Harrisonburg so they wouldn't have to fill out forms every year. Some students just chose not to vote.

Not voting seemed to be the general trend from 1982 to 2002 with the low youth voter turnouts seen during midterm elections, according to CIRCLE.

With the recent participation increase, candidates hope the estimated 41.9 million eligible voters between 18 and 29 will run to the polls this year.

MySpace.com popularity drains

BY VICTORIA SHELOR
staff writer

Like most fads, the social-networking community MySpace.com has enjoyed much popularity since its inception two-and-a-half years ago. But has the novelty worn off? Some say interest in MySpace is declining as people swap to its younger rival, Facebook.com.

"MySpace was something everyone was using to communicate online before we were in college," said sophomore Mallory Micetich, who has had a MySpace page for several years. "Now that Facebook is available, I don't use MySpace as much."

MySpace and Facebook are social-networking Web sites offering members the opportunity to exchange messages and pictures, connect with old friends and make new ones, all without leaving your desk. Many people spend hours creating a MySpace profile page filled with pictures, graphics and other information.

A Web site's popularity is often measured by the amount of time visitors spend on the site. According to the *Washington Post*, MySpace reached a peak of two hours and 25 minutes last year and has since dropped and plateaued at about two hours. Facebook has been

on a gradual incline reaching one hour and nine minutes last month, according to the *Post*.

"I haven't created a MySpace page because I thought the idea was kind of creepy," junior Eleni Menoutis said. She heard of some stalker-related incidents of members accessing information such as addresses and phone numbers from other members' profiles.

"I found out you can make your account private, like on Facebook, so I decided to join, mainly to design my own Web page," Menoutis said.

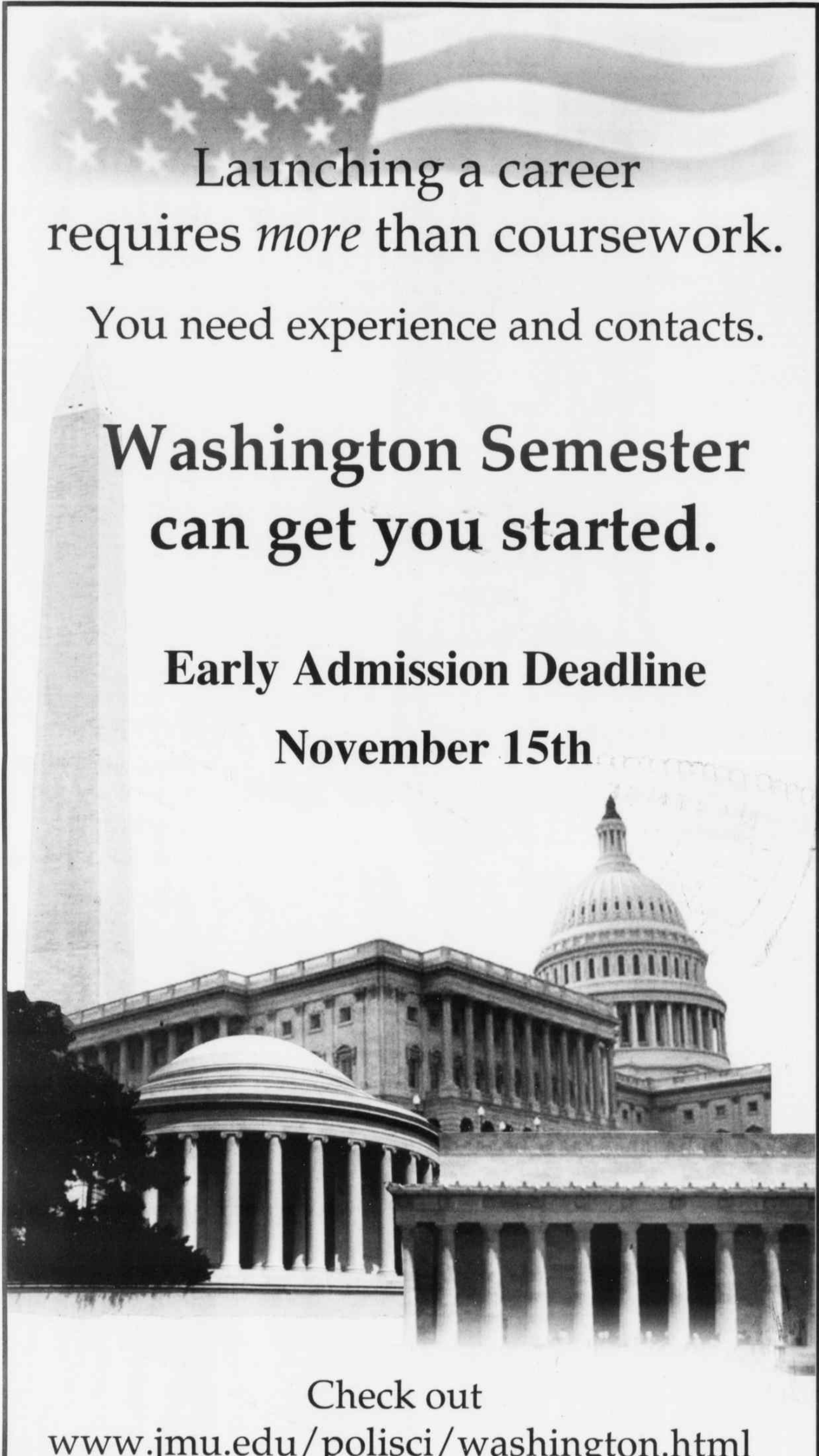
The option to set one's profile to private so that only that member's friends can view their page is perhaps an attempt by MySpace to court more users or to retain current members. This change makes the network slightly more exclusive and more like Facebook. MySpace representatives could not be reached for comment.

However, Facebook recently made changes to its site, adding high schools and businesses to the originally college-only network.

"MySpace was more of a high school thing," Micetich said. "I only check my MySpace every once in a while now."



LAUREN PACKART director



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House Editorial

Separate but unequal

A vote for the 'marriage amendment' is a vote against American values

Proponents of Virginia's marriage amendment, which will be on tomorrow's ballot, have said that two men or two women marrying each other undermines basic American values and is a direct threat to the American family.

If the amendment passes, marriage will be defined as a union between one man and one woman, and will most certainly quell the militant threat of gays forcing straight, God-fearing, flag-waving Americans to turn to the queer side.

It's in the news daily; politicians reference homosexual attacks on heterosexual Americans families, which constantly put "traditional" marriage in jeopardy. They lead us to believe if the gay menace isn't stopped, there will be no more straight marriage, no more procreation and no more basic American values.

Or at least that's the impression we get.

Strangely, no one mentions what basic American values are, and there is a conspicuous absence of video evidence of guerilla gays ambushing churches to disrupt straight weddings and spit on those American values we apparently hold so dear.

The impression President Bush gives us of the gay community is one of a hostile and unfeeling group of sinners and pagans wishing only to usurp the tyrannical rule of heterosexuals, a group of vicious terrorists wanting only one thing — equal rights.

All men are created equal. It's cliché, but foundational and intrinsic to those basic American values we're all told we hold so dear. And in order for this amendment to pass, all legislators will have to do is tweak the Constitution to say, "All men are created equal — except homosexuals."

They are still human beings. They're still in love. They still pay taxes. So why all this mess about gay marriage?

Because straight marriage works? Yes, 50 percent of the time, it works every time.

Because the Bible says it's an abomination? Yes, since the U.S. Constitution prohibits the state establishment of religion.

Because the lawmakers are representative of the law-abiding public? Yes, because most of the population is comprised of rich, old white guys with a 98 percent chance of incumbency.

If churches don't want to acknowledge gay marriage, fine.

They're private institutions, and are granted that freedom under that very same U.S. Constitution. But, it is the government's job to protect its citizens equally.

Heterosexuals vote, pay taxes, own land, work and have their unions recognized.

Homosexuals vote, pay taxes, own land, work and will not have their unions recognized if this amendment passes.

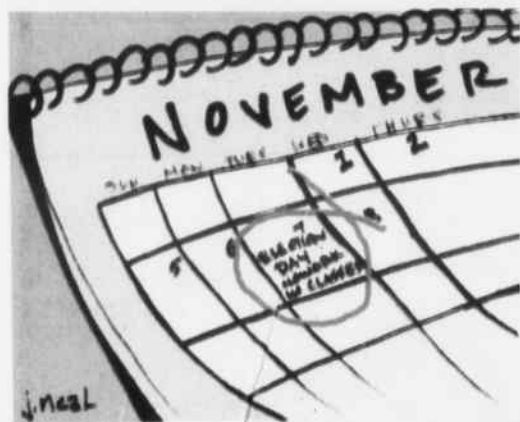
Apparently their money is equal, just not their humanity.



Between the Lines

A day off for Election Day

As America spreads democracy abroad, it neglects democracy at home



BY PATRICK CALLAHAN
senior writer

It's about this time of year when many people begin to speculate of the effectiveness of our political system. The drama of our election season is played out on the largest of stages through rapid media bombardments courtesy of stampeding political campaigns. We see and hear boisterous candidates and those who critique them on our televisions and radios in the weeks and months leading up to an election. And yet, somehow when the day finally arrives — most Americans stay home or go about their normal business as if it is not our civic duty to participate.

It's not just in the past few years that turnout has been poor. According to the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, the United States — the cradle of democracy and protector of freedoms — has ranked first or second, not in the top 10 or 20 but even in the top 100,

but 139 in average per capita voter turnout since 1945.

It was freshman year in Professor Eksterowicz's U.S. Government class when I first heard of the proposal for a national voting holiday, giving the nation a day off for what is truly the most important day for our country in any given year. We already give the nation a holiday for Columbus Day and even for

Labor Day — isn't Election Day at least as significant as these? We have holidays for both Veterans' Day and Memorial Day, don't we applaud and celebrate the lives of these people every year for their service and sacrifice in protecting our belief in a democratic society? A society where we utilize our freedom to democratically select the leaders who will make the tough decisions that affect us all — decisions like going to war.

We find ourselves in one of the most

congressional leaders down the path to corrupt profitability. Our national executive branch has taken away an unprecedented amount of constitutional liberties and has even taken bold steps toward suspending the once-sacred writ of habeas corpus — right to a trial without indefinite detention — not just from enemy combatants but from our own citizens.

The entire world looks to the United States for leadership and guidance and they are increasingly becoming fed up with our hegemonic, isolationist and unilateral tactics across the field of international relations. Citizens from all corners of the world want to be a part of our elections and feel they have a case for being granted such participation due to the astronomical effects of U.S. interests on their respective nations. Our whole planet wants a part in our democratic process, and yet barely a third of our own population cast ballots in the last presidential election.

Our generation will soon hold the reins to our societal future. If we can't find reason enough to be involved now — how will we ever be actively involved in the future?

We must begin building a generational model of political activism that doesn't involve isolating one group or another along political or ideological lines, but instead focuses on bringing all groups to the table for productive political discourse that will allow everyone to seek what former President Clinton calls the "Common Ground."

Two and half years later, I now sit in Professor Eksterowicz's U.S. Presidency class and hear him repeatedly explain that the problems we see today are not the result of a Democratic problem, not a Republican problem, but a systemic problem. Something needs to change and getting the rest of the country involved is a good first step.

Patrick Callahan is a junior political science major.

The United States has ranked 139 worldwide in average per capita voter turnout since 1945.

trying times in America's history. Our nation is at war and our political system is under siege. Scandals rock the landscape as corporate America is increasingly found to be strolling hand-in-hand with

Through Murky Waters

Putting justice to death

Whether or not he was a nice guy, Saddam Hussein deserved more than a show trial

BY ALEX SIRNEY
senior writer

In a trial marred by constant drama, disruption and accusations of bias, Saddam Hussein, former president of Iraq, was found guilty Sunday for his involvement in a security operation in the village of Dujail in 1982 that left 148 people dead. While he will now, according to the sentence, be executed by hanging, the Iraqi government will have a harder time putting to death the debacle that was his trial.

Hussein and co-defendants Barzan al-Tikriti, his half-brother, and Awad Hamed al-Bandar, Iraq's former chief judge, may well be complicit in the Dujail massacre, but the trial that will send the three of them to the gallows and four other co-defendants to prison was far from fair or even conclusive. The evidence presented against the defendants was grisly enough — tales of torture, detention and execution — but the defense claimed that some prosecution wit-

nesses were bribed, some allegedly dead people were still living, and some documents were forged. Whether or not any of this is true is, of course, up for debate, but it is significant that none of these claims were ever investigated by the court.

The five-judge court instead was involved in a rotating parade of faces. Since the trial started last October, two defense attorneys were killed, one fled the country and three judges had come and gone, all by January. Since then things have calmed down — only one attorney was killed — but the defense still boycotted several times and continued to challenge the legitimacy of the court.

While it seems easy to write off much of the defense's antics as mere political posturing, a case made easier by Hussein's frequent tirades against U.S. occupation, it must be remembered that no matter how horrible the charges, part of the goal of that occupation is to ensure a fair judiciary. The Iraqi government's involvement, however, leaves seri-

ous doubts. Not only did the court decline to investigate the defense's allegations, one judge was replaced because he was too lenient toward the defense — he actually let the defendants speak their peace in court. His replacement, who finished the trial, was not replaced when he accused al-Tikriti, Hussein's half brother, "having blood on his hands."

The verdict is no surprise, considering the bias of the court and of public opinion around the world. Konstantin Kosachev of the Russian Duma aptly summarized the situation as "quite predictable, given the attitudes to Saddam Hussein's regime that exist both in and beyond Iraqi society... This is more of a moral ruling, revenge that modern Iraq is taking on the Saddam Hussein regime."

Other foreign reactions were predictable — European Union nations spoke against the death penalty, Iran decried U.S. complicity in the Hussein regime of the 1980s, and the White House was adamant in showing it

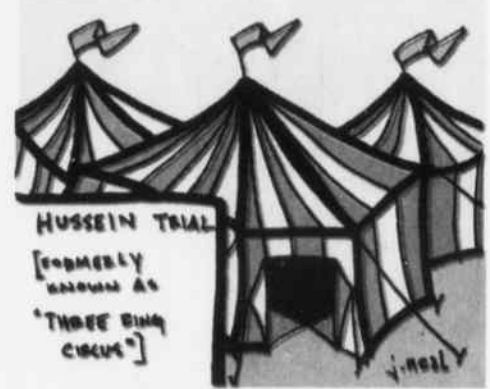
No matter how horrible the charges, part of the goal of U.S. occupation is to ensure a fair judiciary.

still has no interest in talking about reality, especially with a timely verdict two days before midterm elections.

"You now have absolute proof that you've got an independent judiciary in Iraq," White House spokesman Tony Snow said, presumably hoping that, in the world of 24-hour news, people aren't aware of what is actually going on in the world.

That, of course, is a ridiculous assumption, as any aficionado of Court TV will be able to tell that Hussein's trial was a farce and, although his guilt may be quite likely, it is absolutely essential for a country so struggling with legitimacy both to its own people and the world body, that a trial as important as Hussein's be marked with nothing but absolute integrity and credibility. The court in Baghdad, deep within the Green Zone, has failed at this. It can only be hoped that the backlash is limited to the political arena rather — a vain hope indeed in a country so wracked by civil war.

Alex Sirney is a senior anthropology and SMAD major.



Submit Darts & Pats online at thebreeze.org, or e-mail submissions to breezedp@hotmail.com.

Darts & Pats are submitted anonymously and are printed on a space-available basis. Submissions are based upon one person's opinion of a given situation, person or event, and do not necessarily reflect the truth.

DARTS & PATS

A "thank-you-angel-eating-nachos" pat to the munching guy who told me my backpack was unzipped, and then zipped it up for me.

From a grateful sophomore who wishes that all boys would put down their food to help a girl in need.

A "tow-truck-driven-by-Speedy-Gonzales" dart to a certain Harrisonburg towing company who jacked a car in seven minutes flat.

From a senior who loves bailing his mom's car out of impound while she's visiting because you took it with her purse inside, and rewards you with \$120 for your super-sweet skills.

A "you-deserve-employee-of-the-month" to the future American Idol working at Wal-Mart who serenaded me during checkout.

From a senior who usually dreads going to Wallyworld, but was thoroughly entertained by your singing and hopes you're there next time.

A "someone-needs-to-live-a-little" dart to the RA who kicked us out and then threatened to call the police on us for using a dormitory bathroom.

From four seniors who relieved themselves on your building instead of in your bathroom, and hope you realize a toilet is just a toilet.

A "thanks-for-making-my-week" pat to the kid longboarding by ISAT pretending to shoot people with a banana as he rode by.

From an amused sophomore who has now seen just about everything, and will never look at fruit the same way again.

A "have-a-little-bit-of-self-respect" dart to the girl in front of me in the pasta line at Dukes who snatched multiple breadsticks and crammed them into her pasta box.

From a senior who didn't think the stereotypical trashy behavior of the female population on this campus extended to petty theft.

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Letters to the Editor

T-shirts communicate more than meets the eye

In Craig Finkelstein's editorial about Che Guevara T-shirts, he asks the question: "How is supporting the use of weapons of mass destruction, committing torture and widespread murder different than what Osama Bin Laden and al-Qaeda attempt to perform?" Water boarding, an interrogation technique approved by our president and vice-president is clearly defined as torture by Amnesty International. The only country to have ever used a nuclear weapon against another is the United States — twice — killing 200,000 Japanese men, women and children in the process. If you can give me a better definition of using a weapon of mass destruction to commit widespread murder, I'm all ears. Yet I don't think that he would compare raising an American flag to agreeing with the ideals of Osama Bin Laden, nor should he.

As the American flag does, the Che Guevara T-shirt symbolizes an ideology far beyond what is visible to the naked eye. It represents the idea of standing up against corrupt governments and fighting for the rights and freedoms of an oppressed lower class. It represents a hope for all of the poor and dispossessed people of the world that they do not have to settle for being second-class citizens. It represents the fact that while some see economic equality and fairness as dangerous and evil, others see them as humane and beautiful. It represents much more than the actions of one man, it is an idea bigger than one man could ever be.

Matt Keenan
senior Spanish major

The educated students at JMU still fail to understand poverty

The more years I attend JMU, the more I am disgusted by a belief that many educated students still have of the poor. These are the same people who believe that mental illness is a person's fault and that racism/sexism/ageism does not exist. These are the people who only see the poor manipulating people into giving them money and refuse to see the people working hard every day of their lives to support themselves and their family. These are also the people who believe that they struggle with money even though they can afford \$120 pair of jeans, when the truly poor cannot buy a \$5 pair. These are most likely the people whose biggest problems are whether their homework is going to get in the way of their next shopping trip or party schedule.

The small percentage of the poor that do spend their time hassling people for money for whatever reason is somehow overshadowing the large majority of people that desperately need our help. I have seen numerous people working three jobs to barely be able to afford food for their family or the disabled who cannot get a job. Help from the government (Medicaid, food stamps, etc.) takes a long time to get and it is extremely hard to qualify. There are many reasons why you could consider a person's situation their fault; however, none of them work when you put into account biology, psychology and their environment. So before you snub your million-dollar nose at them, hear their story, find out what wonderful people they are, and realize they are just people who for whatever reason need our help.

Kimberly Caylor
senior social work major

Editorial Policies

Responses to all articles and opinions published in *The Breeze* are welcomed and encouraged. Letters should be no longer than 250 words, must include a phone number for verification and can be e-mailed to opinion@thebreeze.org or mailed to MSC 6805 G1, Anthony-Seeger Hall, Harrisonburg, VA 22807. *The Breeze* reserves the right to edit all submissions for length and grammatical style.

The house editorial reflects the opinion of the editorial board as a whole, and is not necessarily the opinion of any individual staff member of The Breeze.

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Matthew Stoss, editor in chief
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Dukes drop hammer on Hens

No. 4 JMU clinches Atlantic 10 South, looks to host in playoffs

BY JOHN GALLE
 sports editor

The JMU football team picked up its seventh straight win of the season at Bridgeforth Stadium on Senior Night, as the Dukes lit up the scoreboard 44-24 over the University of Delaware in front of the third-largest crowd in JMU history.

"It felt like Senior Night to me," JMU senior quarterback Justin Rascati said. "It was really sad going out there with your parents, realizing this could be the last game."

Football Saturday

UD	24
JMU	44

With the win, Madison clinched the Atlantic 10 South title outright and with two games left to play, the Dukes are hoping this won't be their last game at home this season.

"The fans are just unbelievable here," Rascati said. "They give us great energy. So, I hope we can get back here [for the playoffs]."

Rascati was 14-of-20 for 211 yards and three touchdowns. He also rushed 13 times for 79 yards, putting him over 1,000 yards rushing for his career.

The Blue Hens came out of the gate fighting and took the lead on a 2-yard touchdown run by running back Kervin Michaud, capping an eight-play, four-minute opening drive. Michaud was filling in for the injured Omar Cuff, who taxed JMU for a career-high 236 yards rushing and four scores last year.

Delaware's 7-0 lead was short-lived. Madison responded with four unanswered touchdowns, three of which were plays of more than 50 yards.

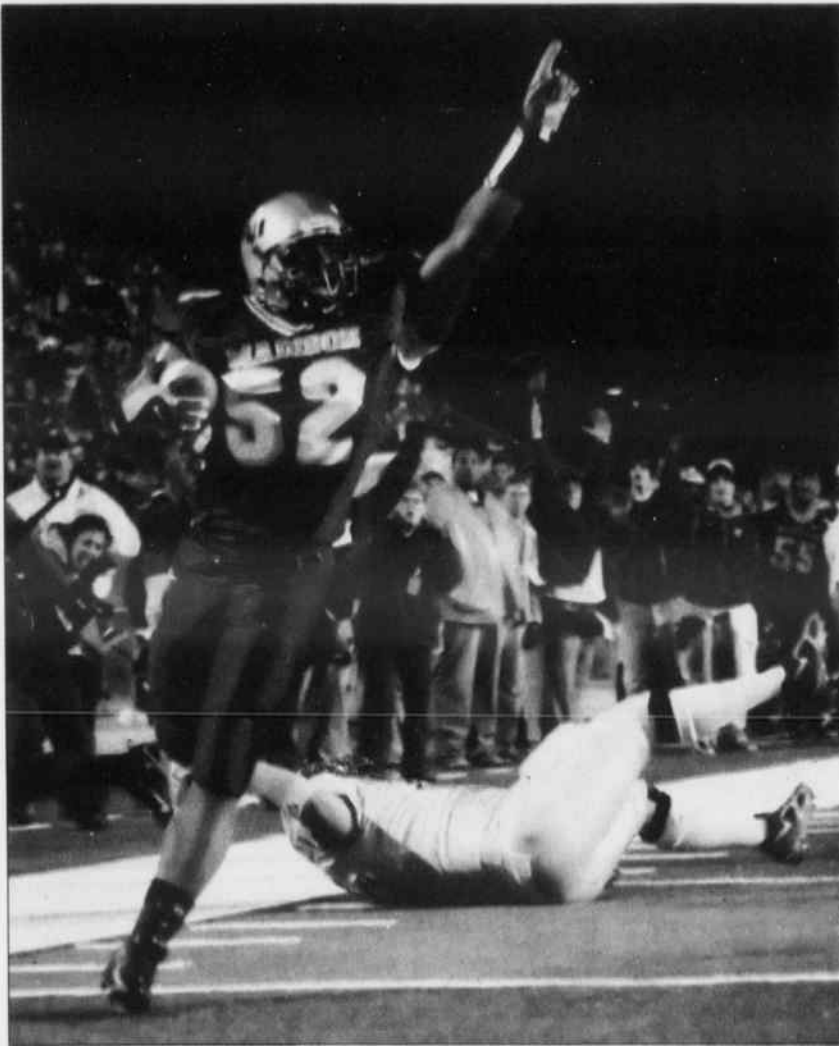
Junior tailback Eugene Holloman broke a 50-yard touchdown to tie the game. Then, just before the end of the first quarter, Rascati found senior wide receiver Ardon Bransford on a corner route to take the lead for good.

"At the beginning of the year, we weren't really clicking," Bransford said. "It was only a matter of time, we got healthy and started clicking and that's what's going on."

In the second quarter, Holloman one-upped himself and broke an 80-yard run for his second touchdown of the day on the first play of the drive. Holloman finished with 171 yards on 15 carries.



Holloman



JMU freshman defensive end Arthur Moates runs into the end zone after a fourth-quarter fumble recovery.

At the half, the Dukes' defense got a chance to rest, as the Dukes led 20-7.

"At halftime we were only down by 13," Delaware quarterback Joe Flacco said. "That's not a deficit we haven't come back from before."

Madison didn't make it any easier.

Again on an opening play of a drive, the Dukes scored as Rascati hooked up with senior wide receiver D.D. Boxley for a 70-yard strike.

Delaware added a 36-yard field goal in the third after enduring an 18-play drive that went just 50 yards.

Senior linebacker Akeem Jordan, who finished with a game-high 14 tackles and two for loss, led JMU's defense. As a unit, the Dukes allowed 20 yards rushing, forced two fumbles and had four sacks. In comparison, Delaware's defense allowed a school-record 542 yards of total offense, as JMU racked up 331 yards on the ground and another 211 through the air.

After finding both of his senior wide-outs, Rascati threw his final touchdown pass to junior

see WIN, page 9

JMU breaks big plays in offensive explosion against Delaware

BY BRIAN HANSEN
 sports editor

There were fireworks on Saturday night, and not just the ones set off before the game to honor the senior football players in their last regular-season home game.

The JMU offense exploded against the University of Delaware for 44 points and 542 yards of total offense.

"We're taking advantage of what the defense gives us," senior quarterback Justin Rascati said. "When teams stack the box like that, because we have such a good running game, our passing game can take advantage of that."

Last week, Rascati was taken off the Payton Award watch list for the best offense player in the country. The University of Louisville transfer responded with another typical performance. Rascati had 300 yards of offense during the game, running for 79 yards and throwing for 211 yards and three touchdowns.

"Justin Rascati is the best offensive football player in the country," JMU coach Mickey Matthews said. "For a quarterback to win these postseason awards, you have to play in a run-and-shoot offense and put up big numbers. Because we don't throw it as much, he doesn't get as much recognition."

Rascati was at his best on plays where it mattered most, routinely picking up big third downs to continue JMU scoring drive. In the first half he ran for four first downs and threw for one on third down.

"The quarterback is a difference-maker," Delaware coach K.C. Keeler said. "We had him covered pretty well and he made big plays. He makes great decisions."

Rascati wasn't the only one having a big day on offense. Junior running back Eugene Holloman bounced back from a tough outing against the University of Richmond to run for 171 yards and two touchdowns on just 15 carries. The Highlands Community College transfer scored on runs of 50 yards and 80 yards.

"I'm just happy I got in the end zone," Holloman said. "Last week was frustrating because the offensive line made some holes and I missed them. I just wanted to run harder for them."

On his second touchdown run of the game, Holloman took a handoff up the middle and went 80 yards without being touched by a Delaware defender.

"[The credit] goes to the offensive line," 5-11, 170-pound back said. "All I have to do is run."

The Dukes' offense also scored four more

see OFFENSE, page 9

Hot streak keeps JMU at No. 2

Senior Hanna Porterfield matched her career high with 19 kills as the JMU women's volleyball team (18-7, 12-4 in the CAA) defeated Northeastern (12-11, 9-6), 3-1 Friday night.

The Dukes won by game scores of 30-25, 21-30, 30-28, and 30-17. It was the 14th win for JMU in their last 16 matches. A week ago, William & Mary snapped the Dukes eight-game winning streak but the Dukes responded taking down the Huskies.

In the first game, JMU led from start to finish jumping out to an early 4-1 lead. NU got the score as close as 12-10 but never got within four points again after the Dukes opened up a 16-11 lead. Senior Bayli Stillwell and sophomore Michelle Johnson combined for 10 kills to lead JMU.

Stillwell finished with 15 kills, 18 digs and two blocks. Johnson finished with eight kills and two blocks.

In the second game, the Huskies reversed things on JMU leading from start to finish, winning 21-30. Sophomore Lauren DeTurk and senior Whitney Turner combined for 10 kills and a .350 attack percentage.

Game 3 was the most closely contested game of the match, featuring eight ties and four lead changes. The Huskies pulled ahead 23-21, but JMU responded with four straight points to take a lead they'd never give back. Porterfield had eight kills and a .571 attack percentage and sophomore setter Lauren Miles had 19 assists.

Along with her 19 kills, Porterfield finished with a .400 attack percentage, three digs and three blocks. Miles finished with 56 assists and eight digs while jumping from eighth to sixth on the single season assists list passing both Cathy Cole and Amber Jaunrubenis.



JMU senior right side Hanna Porterfield blocks a Northeastern spike.

In the final game, JMU finished off the Huskies opening up a commanding 19-9 lead on the strength of Allyson Halls' serve before finishing off NU 30-17. Porterfield collected another eight kills, while Halls finished the day with 13 kills, seven digs and three blocks. Junior libero Jena Pierson finished with registered 22 digs for the Dukes.

— from staff reports

No. 6 JMU falls to No. 4 ODU in OT of CAA finals

VIRGINIA BEACH — JMU's women's soccer team was hot coming into Saturday's Colonial Athletic Association championship game. They had not lost in seven games, going 6-0-1 during that time to put themselves into position to win the league's automatic bid to the NCAA tournament.

However, that run came to an end last night at the Virginia Beach Sportsplex in overtime against Old Dominion University.

Forward Shavon Knight scored three goals, including the game-winner in overtime, to lead the Monarchs over the Dukes 3-2. Fourth-seeded ODU improved to 17-4-1 after upsetting the top-seed, William & Mary, on Thursday and taking down JMU on Saturday.

The game-winner came when forward Janra Pearson crossed the ball into the Dukes' box. The ball was collected by Knight, who scored at the 5:17 mark in the sudden-death overtime.

JMU twice took one-goal leads in the game leading 1-0 and 2-1, but they were unable to hold onto a lead in the end. Senior forward Sarah Cebulski scored just 6:54 into the game off a pass from sophomore midfielder Kimmy Germain.

ODU tied the game when Pearson set up Knight for the first time in the game at the 25:16 mark. Neither team was able to find the net the rest of the first half, as it ended in a 1-1 tie.

Junior midfielder Melanie Schaffer put the Dukes ahead in the second half. Junior midfielder Annie Lowry fired a shot that was saved by Monarch's goalie Lauren Tupman. Schaffer put in the rebound from five yards out to give JMU the 2-1 lead.

However, Knight would not be stopped, tying the game up again with 17:57 left in the game. Midfielder Katie Watson passed the ball to Knight, who slipped past the JMU defense and hit a 10-yard shot into the goal.

Redshirt freshman goalkeeper Missy Reimert made six saves and Tupman made eight, including two in overtime.

— from staff reports

Dukes crowned CAA champs

No. 2 JMU shuts out No. 1 ODU for title, first since 1995

VIRGINIA BEACH — JMU only needed one shot to capture its second Colonial Athletic Association field hockey title yesterday afternoon, as they beat top-seeded Old Dominion University 1-0 at the National Training Center.

It was the Dukes' first CAA championship title since 1995.

The Dukes' (15-7) game-winning shot came off the stick of sophomore midfielder Melissa Walls on a penalty stroke 12 minutes into the contest.

With just over 20 minutes left in regulation, ODU was awarded a penalty

stroke, but was unable to convert.

The Monarchs (19-3) outshot the Dukes 23-1 as JMU's freshman goalkeeper recorded 14 saves on the day. ODU also outcornered JMU 21-1 in the championship game.

JMU senior midfielder and first team All-CAA member Baillie Versfeld was named the CAA Field Hockey Most Outstanding Player. Freshman goalkeeper Kelsey Cutchins and sophomore midfielders Melissa Walls and Lauren Walls joined Versfeld on the All-Tournament team. Also making the team were Hofstra's Leslie DeSimone and Kara McEneaney, Northeastern's Sarah Eckhoff and Susan Hazelset, ODU's Denise Admiraal,

Field Hockey Sunday

ODU	0
JMU	1

Caroline Nichols and Dana Sensenig.

Four field hockey Dukes were recognized by the CAA Friday. Versfeld and freshman forward Meghan Bain were honored as first team All-Conference performers. Bain was also named the CAA Rookie of the Year in voting by the conference's head coaches. Melissa Walls was a second team All-Conference pick, while Bain and freshman defender Tara King were both selected to the All-Rookie team.

In winning the CAA Championship, the Dukes have received the CAA's automatic bid to the 2006 NCAA Field Hockey Tournament. ODU, which is the only team to have appeared in all 25 previous NCAA tournaments, is expected to receive an at-large bid on Tuesday, Nov. 7 at 7:30 p.m. on CSTV.

— from staff reports



MIND WESTHOFF/file photo
 JMU senior midfielder Baillie Versfeld.

GAMES AND PUZZLES



Sudoku

	6						1	
2				5	9			8
		8	2			7		
	5					4		
	2			8			7	
		7					9	
		2			5	3		
3			9	4				6
	1						8	

Rules: Fill in the grid with the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 so that in each row, each column, and each of the three-by-three squares, each number appears exactly once. There is only one correct way to fill in the grid.

Difficulty: ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

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THIS FRIDAY!



WIN: Dukes down Blue Hens to clinch A-10 South

WIN, from page 7
L.C. Baker at the end of the third.

The Dukes' offense slowed down in the fourth quarter. After Rabil added a 31-yard field goal, Flacco scored twice. His first came on a 3-yard run and his second on a 5-yard pass play to tight end Ben Patrick. However, sandwiched between the scores, freshman defensive end Arthur Moats scored on a 22-yard fumble return for Madison.

JMU has Villanova and Towson left on the schedule, with the chance to host a playoff game in the balance.

"We want to be the first team to win 10 games in the regular season," Matthews said. "We want to win the [A-10], so we need to win these next two

games."

Notes: Rascati's first-quarter touchdown pass to Ardon Bransford gave him 43 for his career at JMU. That passed Mike Cawley (1993-'95) on the all-time list. Rascati finished the day with 45 career touchdowns ... Rabil hit his first two extra points to give him 76 consecutive extra points made to break the all-time mark at JMU. Rabil missed his next extra point ... Saturday's attendance was 16,144, the third largest home crowd in JMU history ... Senior running back Maurice Fenner returned from a two-game suspension and saw some playing time for the Dukes ... Arthur Moats' 22-yard fumble return was the fourth defensive touchdown scored by the Dukes this season.

Atlantic 10 standings (through week 10)

North	Record	Conf.
UMass	8-1	6-0
Maine	6-3	5-1
UNH	6-3	3-3
URI	4-5	2-4
NU	3-6	2-4
Hofstra	2-7	1-5

South	Record	Conf.
JMU*	8-1	6-0
Towson	6-3	6-3
Villanova	4-5	3-3
Richmond	5-4	2-4
Delaware	4-5	2-4
W&M	3-6	1-5

*JMU clinches A-10 South

OFFENSE: Dukes rack up 542 yards on way to win

OFFENSE, from page 7

times on drives of less than five plays raising their season total season to 19.

"I've had to tell [offensive coordinator Jeff Durden] to calm down a bit, we're scoring too fast," Matthews said. "We're putting the defense in a jam because they're playing so much."

In the third quarter last night JMU ran six plays. Those six plays went for 128 yards, two touchdowns and four first downs.

"They're a very good of-

fense," Keeler said. "Talent-wise, they are probably just as good as last year, but this team plays with a confidence they didn't have last year."

Last year the Dukes' struggles were in close games, losing four times by a total of 16

points. This season JMU has overcome those struggles by not getting into close games. All nine of their games this season have been decided by double-digits, including the eight wins in which the Dukes' average margin of victory is 20.8 points.

"I think we're a good offense," Rascati said. "We can score many different ways. We can pound you for 17 plays or hit one play for 80 yards."

The JMU offense will travel to Villanova next weekend to take on the Wildcats.



Rascati

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Dixie Chicks' film causes controversy

Privilege of freedom of speech is questioned in new documentary

BY JESS NOVAK
staff writer

Love them or hate them. Disrespect or admire them. But no one can claim that the Dixie Chicks aren't brilliant for the performance they've put on following that fateful comment by lead singer Natalie Maines at a concert in England where she declared she was "ashamed the President of the United States was from Texas." With that, the best-selling recording female act in history was not only banned from various country radio stations, but the three women had their lives threatened by angry fans.

But that's the old news. By now I'm sure we've all debated the magnitude of the comment and whether it rightfully deserved the uproar that ensued. The aim of this article is to analyze the genius of the trio in their reaction and response to the shock waves following the comment through the Friday, Oct. 27 release of their documentary "Shut up and Sing."

Was the comment really terrible enough to provoke death threats and the ice-cold shoulder of the country music community? And what is happening to that little American privilege we like to call freedom of speech? With other bands, for example the Rolling Stones, shouting lyrics like "It's liberty for all / 'Cause democracy's our style / Unless you are against us / Then it's prison without trial," one could question why Maines' off-the-cuff comment caused such a stir compared to songs obviously incorporating such controversial topics and opinions. (The Stones later denied the track "Sweet Neo-Con" had anything to do specifically with Bush, but upon careful examination of the lyrics and the timing of the release, it's questionable).

After struggling through weak ticket sales and dealing with lack of airtime due to country music stations' bitter and determined attempt to keep the Chicks' music from reaching the ears of listeners, the girls have taken a disaster and turned it into a money-making revolution.

The brilliance in the campaign is the swing of opinion the Chicks are generating. Though many polarized, country-loving, Bush-supporting fans will ignore the existence of the documentary — or choose to acknowledge it with more death threats — reviews are already praising the group for their work. And regardless of whether you see the film or not, the real genius is in the exposure and image the trio is projecting. Rather than backing down, they're making noise. And whether you agree or disagree, everyone now knows who the Dixie Chicks are and what they stand for.

Perhaps this catastrophe is what the music industry needs. While other artists are slipping through the scandal cracks, the Dixie Chicks are facing the Man head on. With their faces all over magazines (including some very provocative photo shoots and interviews as seen in *Time* and upcoming in *Entertainment Weekly*), television and the Internet, they may come across as milking as much out of the incident as possible, or, as genuinely trying to break some of the country music stigmas about what kind of opinions are acceptable and which are not.

The entire ordeal could be seen as an over-zealous attempt to generate publicity and finances after a discouraging few months of touring and lack of airtime through a continuing exaggeration of a single comment. Or, a refreshing political step for the music industry to attempt to break down some more barriers between the acceptable and the scandalous. Music is an art form in which the shared opinions and emotions of the artists are expected. The trio's opinion on a political subject expressed to an audience there to listen is simple freedom of speech, and their fight to protect that right is admirable. Now we'll just have to see if the 99-minute film "Shut Up and Sing" causes as much of a stir as a five-second comment.

NEW AND IMPROV'D

THIS SLAPSTICK COMEDY TROUPE DELIVERS HUMOR TO JMU'S CAMPUS



MINDI WESTHOFF/senior photographer

Members of New and Improv'd play a game called "Telephone," in which three members act out the same scene and the last one has to guess what the story is.

BY MEGAN WILLIAMS
contributing writer

"The most gratifying thing about being in New and Improv'd is the groupies," said sophomore Martin Makris during one of the comedy troupe's bi-weekly meetings. This kind of response is to be expected from one of the campus's premier comedy groups.

Although this may be stretching it, what New and Improv'd is a group of talented and passionate individuals who make it their business to keep their audience laughing. It is due in part to their amazing chemistry that they achieve their goal of making everyone laugh. Everyone in the group has something to offer and they support each other on and off the stage.

"The camaraderie of the group is the most gratifying part of being in New and Improv'd," said senior Patrick Shanley. Makris capitalizes that sentiment.

"I started doing improv when I was in high school, but I didn't know much about chemistry within a group, and I think that is the best part of improv: knowing, when you look in someone else's eyes on that stage, what is going on through both your minds and you know exactly what to say because of it," he said.

Senior Selcuk Koruturk knows that teamwork is the key to success.

"That's the great thing about improv; you can't do it alone, and we know if one of us stalls we have this trust built up that we know the people we're working with will help us," he said. "I don't go up there and fear not knowing what to say because I know all the other guys will be there to help me out."

Some of the members of New and Improv'd have been involved with it for four years, while others may be only in their second year. It's always a challenge to include new members each year and help them to build that trust and camaraderie with which the group is reliant. This year, two new members, or "newbies" as they're called, have been admitted into the group. They are both freshmen and said they are excited to be a part of the group.

At the newbie induction show Oct. 20, freshmen Brandon Shockney and Chris "Crispy" Parthemos were involved in all the games and marked their official membership into New and Improv'd.

When asked how they were feeling only two days before the performance, they expressed both their excitement in anticipation and their nervousness.

"I'm not going to say that I don't have a couple of small, elegant butterflies floating around in my stomach, but as I said, they are very elegant and I've grown to love them," Parthemos said. "I have named them Frank and Mysterious. But that's really just a fancy and stupid way of saying that I am a little bit ready, but not completely."

"The thing about improv is it's hard to ever be ready, but it's a mixture of excitement and being really really nervous," Shockney said. "But I think it will be a great show; the one show that will really get us integrated with the group and make us like a family, so I'm really looking forward to that."

While the newbies shared their thoughts about the show, the experienced members of the group reflected on their newbie induction show and how they have grown over the past years.

"I sucked, very bad," Koruturk said. "I don't know how I got into the group, to tell you the truth. I would break all the rules of improv, but I definitely feel like I've grown, and changed and hopefully improved."

The important thing is to learn from past experiences and continue to improve, and that means having to relearn the basics constantly and learn more challenging things.

"Well, I'm actually getting worse," Martin said to loud applause from the rest of the members. "And my hair is much longer."

The night of the newbie induction performance was met with great anticipation from everyone who turned out to see the entire group, and especially the newbies, perform.

"I haven't been to a performance before, but I've heard they are very funny and a lot of people like coming to see them, so I'm very excited," says freshman Lindsey Huizenga before the show.

The members of the group were all dressed up for the special occasion and were met with roaring applause by everyone who had come out to support them as they were introduced. The show was led by Koruturk, and in New and Improv'd fashion, it consisted of a number of improv games where the audience is at liberty to decide what/where/how/with what the games will entail. This proved unbearably funny when group members have to act out being attacked by a rubber duck, beating it with a purple spatula, and then being detained by a group of existentialists.

The only thing different about this performance was that the newbies were included in every game. They did a terrific job and the audience congratulated them with much applause and laughter as well as positive feedback.

"I love the new guys," said freshman Therese Mayer, a huge fan of New and Improv'd. "I think they did an excellent job. It's amazing how the rest of the group can teach them so much in so little time, and it's all spur of the moment. They can practice the games, but they can't plan it." After the show, audience members hung around to offer their congratulations and tell the group members how much they enjoyed the show. The newbies were given their official New and Improv'd T-shirts and were able to relax after having put on such an amazing show.

When asked how they were feeling now that their first big show was over, Parthemos said, "I feel good; I feel like we lived up to all the talk and all the hype. We said we were going to do good and I think we did good. There is always room for improvement but I think it went well."

The other group members offered their support too.

"I've learned so much from the newbies; they are freaking hilarious," said junior Lindsay Long.

When asked how he was feeling after the show, Shockney said, "I'm already pumped for the next show."

For more information about New and Improv'd, check out its Facebook group, or its Web site at orgs.jmu.edu/improv.

Preview

Death of homosexual student depicted in new production

'The Laramie Project' addresses a single Wyoming homicide that sent shockwaves throughout the nation

BY ADAM LOWE
contributing writer

Matthew Shepard is found dead in his hometown of Laramie, Wyo. And there are six different sides of the story. This ill-fated tale of gay University of Wyoming student Matthew Shepard's life will be retold by JMU's School of Theatre and Dance in Moisés Kaufman's "The Laramie Project" this week.

The show's script is the retelling of the interviews conducted by the Tectonic Theatre Company with the residents of the town of Laramie, Wyo., conveying the accounts of people whose lives Shepard touched, including those of his two killers.

Stage manager Tarin Hurstall said the show focuses on seeing these Tectonic Theatre members and how they transform into the different characters of Laramie whose stories are the center of the

show, bringing insight to the events surrounding Shepard's death.

Cast members include freshman R.J. Haynes as Greg Pierotti, senior Karl Holmstrom as Moisés Kaufman, sophomore Shelly Newhouse as Barbara Pitts, junior Asher Nicholson as Stephen Belber, sophomore Lauren Ramsey as Amanda Gronich, sophomore Karla Sakas as Mercedes Herrero, senior Jackson Thompson as Andy Paris and freshman Bekah Wachenfeld as Leigh Fondakowski. These eight JMU students will play the parts of more than 60 people closely affected by the incident.

"It's exciting when you get to play this many characters," Thompson said. "It's a test of your acting skills, making each character different."

Wachenfeld found that she really connected on many levels with one of her roles, Shepard's best friend.

But while some actors easily connect with their characters, others had a harder time empathizing with theirs. Nicholson, who among his other parts will be playing the Rev. Fred Phelps and Aaron McKinney.

"It's interesting playing those two, because they're really the bad guys, and interesting playing someone you disagree with so strongly," Nicholson said.

The show is in the style of "moment work," in which seemingly separate scenes are linked through thematically interrelated moments. "The Laramie Project's" script is separated into such moments, with often six different people talking about six different things, their six different

sides of the same story.

"People might try to say there are some anti-religious, but really the whole point is anti-hate," Thompson said. "There's no excuse to do that to somebody. If it can happen to a town like Laramie, it can happen here."

"'Laramie Project' can open eyes and get people aware of what's going on," Nicholson said. The script tries to demonstrate that violence isn't always the answer.

"[Director] Roger Hall really does a great job directing. He deserves a lot of credit for what he's done with this," Thompson said.

"The Laramie Project" will be performed at Latimer-Shaeffer Theatre, Duke Hall, from Tuesday through Saturday, Nov. 7 to 11, at 8 p.m.

Tickets are \$8 for general admission and \$6 for JAC Card holders, senior citizens and children under 12 (though the show is recommended for mature audiences.)

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